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BUGABOO

German to the end was the Fatherland's diplomacy. And not the least German of its final efforts was the effort openly and officially made in a part of a statement authorized by the German Cabinet on the morning of May 20th through the Associated Press. "We demand nothing more than that Americans place the Fourteen Points opposite the peace terms," goes the statement. "We do not believe that anyone in the United States will have the courage to claim that there can be found in the peace conditions one single trace left of President Wilson's programme."

Not one single trace left of the Fourteen Points! Our dailies have carried that statement, in one form or another, in their reports of utterances of extreme Socialists, Bolsheviks, Pacifists, Anarchists, I. W. W., and U. S. Senators. Hearst papers have carried it "coiled in the Flag," as usual. Ultra-modern weeklies have carried it in their editorials. All the friends of Germany and enemies of this country shouted it—the whole crew of them—having already forgotten how long America bore with the arch-incendiary across the water; how at last she struck, and but once. And their dupes nodded, "Yes; that's so. Not a shred of the Fourteen left to hide our national shame."

Not one single trace left! We can't get over that. The President has been routed before, but never—never—has he failed to leave a single trace. He is about as traceless as Roosevelt. Let's do the thing that, strangely enough, the Germans and Pro-Germans didn't do—summon our courage and "place the Fourteen Points opposite the peace terms."

Not a trace! Here goes.

The first glance reveals three distinct traces,—namely, Points VII, VIII, X, providing respectively for the evacuation and restoration of Belgium, France—including Alsace-Lorraine—Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro. The confusion that Germans and Pro-Germans would find in distinguishing traces of these Points in the peace terms is the confusion that all men suffer who think one thing and talk another. It isn't the lack of

traces that hurts; it's the presence of them. Three plainly visible traces here.

Points XI, XII, XIII, providing for the autonomous development of the peoples of Austria-Hungary and of Turkey, and the erection of an independent Polish State, including "the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish population," are equally plain to an open eye; equally painful to a German one.

True, the Conference had not worked out to completion the details involved in giving autonomy to the peoples of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, but its declared purposes and its actions have been unmistakable.

True, also, the Polish boundaries contain districts with large German majorities. Are these districts "indisputably Polish"? Well, what else are they? They certainly are not indisputably German, and they have got to be indisputably something. Three facts stand out: the majorities in these districts are indisputably Polish, successive Prussian governments and Pan-German leagues have tried to oust the Poles from what was indisputably Polish territory by methods that were indisputably German; the Conference has kept German the indisputably German territory of East Prussia, although had it chosen to regard East Prussia and West Prussia as a unit, it could have given both provinces to Poland on the ground that Prussia contained, as it actually does, a Polish majority. In the settlement of the Polish boundaries the non-German eye will not waver in recognizing an unshaken adherence to Point XIII.

Points XI, XII, and XIII we claim as discoveries and add them to the three indelible traces already found. Altogether—six traces.

The readjustment of the frontiers of Italy "along clearly recognizable lines of nationality," provided for by Point IX, has not been carried out in strict accord with the spirit of that Point. There do seem to be difficulties in applying these Points that demand "indisputably" and "clearly recognizable" solutions. But that's the way with categorical points of this nature, whether they be fourteen or only ten. Apparently the principle of nationality has been discarded in Italy's favor in so far as she has been granted military boundaries at Austria's expense. On

the other hand the same principle has been discarded to her detriment in the case of Fiume. But we must confess that Point IX as a trace is sadly blurred.

The impossible cannot be expected of the Conference, and it was impossible to fulfil to the letter Points VI, IV, and XIV. It was impossible to build right off a new Russia, such as the majority of Russians want built; it was impossible to disarm the nations and to form them into a League according to the letter of Points IV and XIV. But the motive that gave birth to Point VI has dominated the actions and intentions of the Conference in regard to Russia; and the motives that gave birth to Points IV and XIV have dominated the Peace terms.

Point VI: "The evacuation of Russian territory and . . . the best and freest coöperation . . . in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed determination of her own political development." Evacuate Russia. Evacuate a tornado! Coöperate with Russia. Yes; but which Russia? The Russia of Petrograd and Moscow or that of Archangel, Omsk, and the Don? The Conference tried the former. Prinkipo is unique among the attempts of governing bodies to coöperate with an enemy openly self-dedicated to cutting their throats. And the attempt failed. Followed an attempt, equally unique in its way, to fatten up the avowed assassin for his murderous work. And that attempt failed. It also! Can it be that in Lenine and Trotsky President Wilson has at last met people as refreshingly naïve as himself? Undoubtedly the Conference desires coöperation with Russia; obviously coöperation is possible only with a Russia that will coöperate.

Point IV: "Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety." We cannot conceive of anyone who would seriously say that the Conference did not honestly wish for the realization of this aim; that the realization of it would not have afforded the greatest relief to the Conference itself; that the Conference did not earnestly strive to realize it. But what was there to do? Exchange guarantees. But with whom? Could the Conference ask the world to exchange guarantees with Germany and forthwith to disarm? Not this world; not the

world that has experienced Germany in the flesh. But the Conference took the first and the longest stride in the direction of international disarmament: *it disarmed Germany*.

And Point XIV: "A general association must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." Covenants — guarantees — political independence and territorial integrity to small states. Belgium! More guarantees; more scraps of paper. No; it cannot be said that a general association has been formed, since the immediate admission of Germany has not been provided for. But — the way for her admission has been left open. And that will come when the nations have regained confidence in Germany; when — well, if not in this world, perhaps, in the next. Why hurry? This general associating is not the only feature of the League of Nations ideal that is unlikely to be realized in the near future.

The Peace terms did not follow Point VI to the letter. But that was not the fault of the Conferees. The spirit of the Point finally controlled their actions and determined their engagements for the future. This fact we count another distinct trace of the Fourteen. Seven, in all. The Peace terms did not follow Points IV and XIV to the letter; they were formed by them. Point XIV, particularly, was so woven into the Terms that it could not be disentangled even by the Great Ignored among our Senators, powerful and incensed though they be to harm. The Borahs and other roarers will have passed into the footnotes of unread history before the yeast of Point XIV can have begun to work; but once it begins, it will work with yeast's multiplying force, and as long as the world shall live. This Point has charged the Terms with incalculable potentialities beside which all literal divergences between the former and the latter fade into illegibility. Its incorporation into the Terms constitutes the President's chief diplomatic triumph in Paris; his chief political triumph in Washington; one of the chief personal triumphs in history. The German Cabinet declared there are no traces of Point XIV in the Terms! Future German generations will rise to bless the traces their ancestors now declare obliterated.

Nine traces; not one less.

We proceed to the Points that have raised the more furious issues: Numbers I, II, III, and V.

We admit at once that the Peace was not an "open covenant openly arrived at," and that, in consequence, Point I has gone by the board. We pause, however, to register the opinion that the First Point is the only one of the Fourteen that has left no trace upon the Terms.

At first blush it looks as though the Terms contain no declaration or agreement concerning "Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas," and that, as a result, there is no trace of Point II in the Terms. But isn't freedom of the seas implied in the formation of a League of Nations? If a League of Nations isn't for just that kind of thing, in the name of all visions what is it for? From the congregated might of an international body formed for the purpose—and from it only—can the promulgation of international marine laws issue with authority. The promulgation of such laws will necessarily be a slow and never-ceasing process. It would be impossible to formulate anything permanent in six months; it would be difficult even to adopt a set of guiding principles; it would be inappropriate to incorporate either in the terms of a dictated peace. The main thing is that the machinery for keeping the seas open has been set up.

Closely akin to Point II is Point III, providing for "The removal, as far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions." It has proved one of the high pressure areas of the Peace terms. Unquestionably the Conference imposed economic restraints on Germany; but that it erected economic barriers is another question.

To begin with, the Conference could not have relieved Germany of economic restraints or secured an equality of trade conditions without surrendering reparations, which all nations—including Germany—acknowledge are due; for any indemnity is bound to handicap economically the country paying it. A number of the economic terms were framed for this very purpose—to secure the payment of the reparation awards. We need not discuss them. The issue here is not one of economic barriers, it is the issue of reparation or no reparation. And that is a dead issue.

Certain other of the terms covered by the German protest were simply and justly to prevent Germany's capitalizing the distress due to lack of necessities, which she herself has wantonly caused. Such were the provisions that for periods of from six months to three years Germany was to impose no tariff duties higher than the lowest in force in 1914 on specified food-stuffs and clothing materials, and to give options on a certain per cent of dyestuffs and chemical drugs. These Terms, by giving this the right of way, adequately protected the requirements of Germany's home consumption.

Similar protective measures were embodied in the Terms that for five years forbade Germany's imposing tariff duties on goods originating in former German territory and in Luxembourg, an obviously fair arrangement for preventing a change of sovereignty's ruining those of Germany's former subjects who had become dependent upon her internal trade.

We now come to economic Terms for which we make a claim that we realize no German, Pro-German, or other form of German would by any chance agree with. For five years Germany was required *under the condition of reciprocity* to give the Allies most-favored-nation treatment; admit their ships to the use of German ports on the same terms as those her own ships enjoy; give them most-favored-nation treatment in fishing and in coasting trade; offer adequate safeguards against unfair competition, especially the use of false markings; and promise to regard the laws and judicial decisions of allied states. As these terms were based on the principle of reciprocity, it seems to us that they went as far toward breaking down economic barriers as anything short of Free Trade could go.

Equally well aimed at the same goal was the opening of Germany's railroads and rivers to the use of the nations in the interior of Europe. If this and the foregoing do not constitute a removal of trade barriers, what does?

The great economic barrier, it must be confessed, was not removed—the protective tariffs of all nations. There is one very good reason why. The nations still regard the protection of trade as a national rather than an international question. And of all nations, America would probably be the last to consent to any

other interpretation. The abolition of protection by tariff, therefore, was impossible. We do not mean that failing to remove this—what many consider the most permanent—barrier to peace, the Conference in the least violated Point III; for the language of that Point, “the removal, *as far as possible*, of economic barriers,” laid on the Conference no onus to achieve the impossible.

Finally, any conclusion in regard to Point III must be reached in the light of the proposal—widely advocated at the time the Points were brought down from the mountain—that the Entente unite in a post-bellum boycott of German goods. If the main purpose of Point III was to prevent such a boycott, it achieved that purpose; and the friends of Germany should have been devoutly thankful.

The economic conditions of the Terms were in no wise responsible for economic hardships caused Germany by the reparation awards—awards that have been more merciful than just. They have broken down certain economic barriers. They have raised not one. This negative achievement alone—to have prevented an economic boycott—reflects the influence of Point III.

There remains Point V, “A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is so determined.” Germans and Pro-Germans will find scant traces of this Point in the mandatary system.

What could the Conference have done? “Based upon a strict observance of the principle that the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined,” an adjustment that handed these colonies back to Germany was impossible; Germany’s brutalization of her former subjects precluded that solution. A grant of complete freedom to these colonies at the present stage of their development would have been a push on the backward path of Barbarism.

Guidance they needed. The question was, Whose? Ideally speaking, the proper guide was the League. We do not know

what objections to this solution arose. It may have been impractical. The ambitions of the great colonial Powers may have stood in the way of it. Perhaps the mandatary system *was* a compromise. We cannot deny it. But neither can anyone deny that the mandatary system is a direct product of Point V. The two great colonial Powers who conquered Germany's colonies renounced special privileges in their conquests and submitted to the overlordship of a League of Nations in the management of them. To this extent they submitted to one principle that Point V stood for—and, perhaps, the most vital principle—namely, that as in any country society at large assumes responsibility for its weak and backward individuals; so in the world society at large—a society of nations—assumes responsibility for its weak and backward nations.

No one can accurately foresee the far-reaching results of this recognition. It is just possible that France and England signed away their colonial empires when they recognized a principle that may ultimately disintegrate these and reintegrate their parts under a single mandatary—the mandatary of humanity, the League of Nations. The eye that sees no trace of Point V in the colonial adjustment reached by the Conference is blind to one of the most significant of the influences exerted by the Fourteen Points.

Not a single trace left of the Fourteen Points! Against that we place a claim: only a single one of the Fourteen Points has *not* left a trace. True the traces are not equally clear. Nine Points have left unmistakable traces,—namely those that have to do with the restoration of Belgium, France, Rumania, Serbia, Poland, and Russia; with the autonomous development of the peoples of Austria-Hungary and of Turkey; with international disarmament and the formation of a League of Nations. In two other cases the traces are less distinct—removal of economic barriers and colonial adjustment; in two others, still less so—Italian boundaries and freedom of the seas. But even here traces of the Fourteen Points are visible to the naked eye. The First Point is the only one that has not influenced the Terms.

Not one single trace! Maybe this was another case of Germany's deluding herself,—another case of England wouldn't come in, Italy wouldn't come in, America wouldn't come in;

France couldn't fight, England couldn't fight, America couldn't fight; America's transports would be sunk, England's navy would be sunk, England herself would be sunk; England's colonies would revolt, Entente Socialists would revolt, German-Americans would revolt. (Ireland *did* revolt. Just like Ireland—ever inexplicable.)

Or maybe it was another case of Bugaboo — of threatening to proclaim a Mohammedan holy war if France and Britain used African and Asiatic troops, to destroy Europe if the Entente didn't stop fighting, to join the Russian Bolsheviki if the Conference didn't draw up the Peace terms Germany wanted.

Was it a case of German self-delusion? Or was it a case of German Bugaboo—a case of attempting to scare our national conscience with the accusation of a crime that had never been committed? Self-delusion or Bugaboo—which?

Not a trace! That's too much for even the German power of self-delusion; it *must* have been Bugaboo.

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